

Letter from Thomas A. Watson to Fred DeLand, November 28, 1907

E. Braintree Mass. Nov. 28th 1907. Mr. Fred DeLand, Pittsburg Penn. Dear Sir:—

No, I should not say that Ponton was the first to suggest the “Exchange” idea. I am sure that was a perfectly familiar idea in Prof. Bell's mind long before Ponton came forward.

The reason why P. is so prominent in my memory is probably that he was the first one with whom a contract was made to start the thing practically. At any rate he was so enthusiastic about it and the ease with which he could raise the money needed to establish exchanges, that he made me, at least, think the profits were about to begin to roll in.

You have done right in giving Bell himself credit for originating the “Exchange” method. Nothing whatever came of John Ponton's talk and promises.

Yours very truly Thomas A Watson